Equity in Telecom PSUs

5355. SHRI GHULAM NABI" AZAD: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Department of Telecom Services (DTS) is strongly resisting the Department's disinvestment move *to* bring down Government's equity in telecom public sector undertakings; and

(b) if so, the salient features thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) and (b) Government equity in both VSNL and MTNL has already been brought down to 53% and 56.25% respectively. The question of further disinvestment is being examined in consultation with concerned Departments.

Regularising of ED Employees

5356. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the Minister of COMMUNICA TIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Minister of Communications had informed the public through a Press Conference held on 4th April, 2000 that the Ministry is in favour of regularising the Extra Departmental Employees under Department of Posts;

(b) if so, the details, if any, in the way of this view being translated into a formal Government decision;

(c) the impediments, if any, in the way of this view being translated into a formal Government decision;

(d) if so, the measures to overcome them; and

(e) if not, the tentative time schedule for implementing this decision?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICA-TIONS (SHRI TAPAN SIKDAR): (a) to (e) The Minister of Communications had mentioned in a press conference held on 4th April, 2000 about the terms and conditions of engagement for ED employees in general," and also the demands made by Staff Unions about the grant of status of regular employees and pension of ED Agent. All aspects of Extra Departmental System providing^, postal facilities in the rural areas of the country were also discussed in the recent meeting of the Consultative Committee of the Ministry of Communications.